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Annotated Outline

Title: Love as Pictured in W.H Auden's "Lay Your Sleeping Head, My Love"

I. Introduction

Opening Sentence: Wystan Hugh Auden's works are known for having a very special technique and style used for dealing with moral and political issues.

A. The persona of the poem uses different images to portray the idea that love is not meant to last forever, that it is not perfect, and that people should care more about sharing and supporting others in the experience of loving.

B. "Lay Your Sleeping Head, My Love" exemplifies Auden's technique and style in order to convey his feelings and ideas about love. He uses strong images and allusions in order to portray the idea that love is beautiful and finite.

Thesis Statement: The persona of the poem uses different images to portray the idea that love is not meant to last forever, that it is not perfect, and that people should care more about sharing and supporting others in the experience of loving.

II. (Body) Topic Sentence: The persona uses elements such as time, health, youth, and death in order to state that love has to be shared in times of youth.

A. "Time and fevers burn away / Individual beauty from / Thoughtful children, and the grave / Proves the child ephemeral:" (Auden 3-6). These lines show that time makes people lose their health and youth; therefore, love has to be welcomed while our bodies are still young and healthy.

B. "Certainty, fidelity / On the stroke of midnight pass / Like vibrations of a bell," (Auden 21-23). The persona states within these lines that nothing lasts forever, not even love; hence, people should embrace love while they can.

C. "[...] but from this night / Not a whisper, not a thought, / Not a kiss nor look be lost." (Auden 28-30). These two lines portray the idea of *Carpe diem* but in regards to love; therefore, the persona says: love while you can.

CS: Therefore, the persona in this poem states that our human bodies are vulnerable to time; thus, people should embrace love while their bodies are young because death snatches away the ability to love.

III. (BODY) Topic Sentence: Love is a difficult emotion to experience because of people's doubts, but people should share their love, embrace its beauty, and let it flourish.

A. "Lay your sleeping head, my love, / Human on my faithless arm;" (Auden 1-2). These lines state that love is made to share. It also shows that the imperfection of being humans should not stop people from loving.

B. "But in my arms till break of day / Let the living creature lie, / Mortal, guilty, but to me / The entirely beautiful." (Auden 7-10). The persona here states that people should

love until they lose their strength, even if we make mistakes. This is what makes love be beautiful.

C. "Soul and body have no bounds: / To lovers as they lie upon" (Auden 11-12). The persona states in these lines that love does not have to be planned; there are no limits for it. People have to let love flourish.

CS: Hence, the persona states that love is not made to be perfect; love is made to share, care, and support others even if difficult times come; thus, the imperfection of the experience is what makes love to be so beautiful.

IV. Conclusion: According to the persona, love must be embraced during youth because our bodies die with the passing of time; therefore, people lose their ability to love when death comes. Since there are no standards or limits for love, sharing and supporting others, even if it is imperfect, is what matters the most.